

# 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly

## Fifth Session

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### Community Power Rates

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to speak about the cost of energy and the role it plays in the lives of all residents of our territory today, and the importance of energy for the economic and social well-being of our territory into the future.

I want to start with power rates and I'm going to, and Mr. Speaker, I am trying to understand why some communities in the Northwest Territories today pay 25 to 35 percent more for power than other comparable communities. True examples of this are, firstly, the community of Trout Lake, where power distribution is handled by Northland Utilities. When you compare that to a similar sized community which happens to be in the same region, such as Nahanni Butte, which has their distribution handled by the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the rates are 20 to 25 percent higher than in Trout Lake.

Another example, Mr. Speaker, is the community of Wekweeti, where again Northland Utilities is responsible for distribution, and the community of Whati, where NTPC handles the distribution, and rates are again 20 percent lower in Wekweeti, which has a much smaller population.

I believe that as a government we have a responsibility to deliver the best, most affordable power rates possible to our communities and the residents who live there. I think there should be an investigation or an inquiry as to why this discrepancy exists, why in some communities residents are paying 20 to 25 percent higher rates than in other comparable communities. Something needs to be looked at, Mr. Speaker.

As a government looking into the future, we must move ahead with our partners in expanding the Taltson hydro facility. We need to look at other smaller hydro developments to power our communities. Wind power should also be thoroughly explored to power our communities.

The Power Corporation has a general rate application in to the PUB and rates are proposed to increase. How can our residents continue to keep paying more for power? Our Power Subsidy Program, Mr. Speaker, is going to need to be reevaluated.

This government needs to take action on developing possible new energy resources and ensuring our people are getting the best possible deal on power. Our future depends on it, Mr. Speaker, and I'll have questions for the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

--- Applause